(e) Once Amnesty is declared the Indian Missions take up the matter with the local authorities for either regularizing the stay of the Indian workers or organize smooth issue of Emergency Certificates for their deportation to India. Further, the complaints of ill treatment, harassment, breach of contracts etc., received from the Indian workers are also taken up by the Mission with the sponsors/employers, Labour Department and local police authorities for appropriate action.

Women harassed by spouses

1865. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of complaints from women harassed by their spouses abroad have gone up since 2004;

(b) if so, the number of complaints received since 2004, year-wise; and

(c) the action that has been taken through Indian Mission abroad, diplomatic and political channels?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The number of complaints received in the Ministry in the last 3 years are us under:

2005	—	19
2006	—	65
2007 (till October)	—	116

(c) The Ministry has launched a scheme this year to provide legal and financial assistance to women deserted by their overseas Indian spouses. Under the Scheme, Missions based in countries having a large Indian Diaspora and comparatively more number of such complaints, have been authorized to empanel credible Indian Women's Organization/Indian Community Association/NGOs to provide legal assistance to such victims. Financial assistance up to a limit of US $ 1,000 per case can be released to these Indian Women's Organizations/Indian Community Associations/NGOs to meet initial cost and incidental charges for documentation and filling of the cases by them on behalf of the eligible victims.

Indian labourers in foreign countries

†1866. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the incidents of misbehaviour with Indian labourers working in foreign countries have substantially increased;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Indian labourers are forced to work at hazardous work places in difficult conditions with the connivance of touts and such cases are on the rise;

(c) if so, the action being taken by Government in this regard; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) the number of Indian labourers died in foreign countries during last three years and the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Backward regions grant fund

†1867. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 250 districts have been identified as the most backward districts in the country;

(b) if not, the actual number thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that development work is done through Backward Regions Grants Fund meant for development in these districts;

(d) if so, total amount allocated to this fund in the years, 2004-05, 2005-06, and 2006-07 separately; and

(e) the actual amount provided during above said years, year-wise

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yer, Sir, The list of 250 districts is given in the enclosed Statement-I (*See* below). The Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) Programme was launched in the financial year 2006-07. 147 of these districts were covered under the Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana (RSVY), which had been in operation since the financial year 2003-04 and has been subsumed into the BRGF programme in 2006-07.

(c) The Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) programme is one of the several development programmes administered by the Central Ministries aimed at local development. However, it has two main distinguishing features, one, that the programme provides united funds which can be used for gap filling in any of the sectors and, two that the Panchayats and Municipalities are the planning and implementing units of the programme.

(d) and (e) The districts covered under the RSVY are entitled to a total allocation of Rs. 45 crore in six instalments @ two instalments per year. Many of the districts did not claim their total instalments in each year. An amount of Rs. 1241.08 crore and Rs. 1210.74 crore was released to RSVY districts during the financial years 2004-05 and 2005-06 respectively. During 2006-07, an amount of Rs. 1925 crore was allocated to the BRGF programme at the stage of the Revised Estimates. Out of this allocation, Rs. 1818 crore was released to the erstwhile RSVY districts, Rs. 86.56 crore was released for capacity building of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Rs. 20 crore was released as development grant to districts under BRGF. Details of the releases made under Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana (RSVY) and the BRGF programme during the years 2004-05 to 2006-07 and till date are given in the Statement-II.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi